

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
District of Minnesota**



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Dear Attorney:

The District of Minnesota is pleased to provide you with this Electronic Case Filing (ECF) information packet. The ECF system will change the way the court conducts business. Attorneys will be required to file documents with the Court via the Internet. The purpose of this packet is to notify you of the following information:

- 1) The changes that will affect your federal court practice beginning in February.
- 2) You have been assigned a login and password.
- 3) Electronic Case Filing will go live in May. A specific date will be announced soon.
- 4) You need to register for ECF in May at www.mnd.uscourts.gov/cmecf.htm. Use your login and password to access the system.

The information packet describes the four phases of the project that will bring you on-line in May. Those phases include:

Phase One: Register for E-mail Noticing

Phase Two: Court Goes Live Internally on Case Management (CM) System

Phase Three: ECF Training

Phase Four: Court Goes Live on ECF

Be sure to review this material and share it with other attorneys and staff who may be involved with your court filings.

With your help, we look forward to a successful implementation of the ECF system in the District of Minnesota. Be sure to visit our web site at www.mnd.uscourts.gov for up-to-the minute updates on the progress of the electronic filing initiatives. If you have questions, please call our help desk toll-free at **1-866-325-4975** and leave a voice mail message. A staff member will promptly return your call.

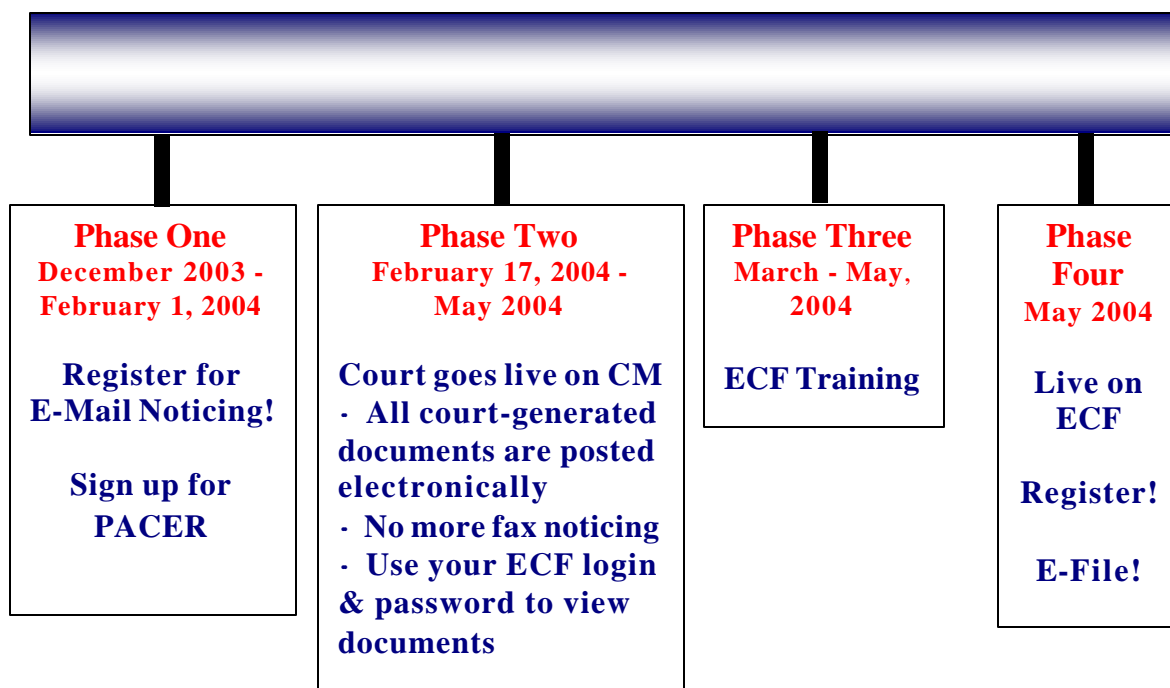
Sincerely,

Richard D. Sletten
Clerk of Court

PROJECT TIMELINE

DISTRICT OF MINNESOTA

Electronic Case Filing



ARE YOU READY?

Electronic Case Filing (ECF) IS COMING SOON!

The District of Minnesota is preparing for the implementation of a new electronic case management system for civil and criminal cases. This project will change the way the court conducts business. Electronic case filing will enable attorneys to file documents with the court via the Internet.

Many of you have attended the demonstrations hosted by the court designed to explain the benefits of the new program. We have appreciated your input into and enthusiasm for the new system. As we move forward through each phase of the project, you will experience changes in the way we interact. The following information describes the four phases of ECF that will affect you. Please make sure you understand what to do along the way in order to facilitate a smooth transition.

Phase One - Register for E-Mail Noticing!

The first step in the project is the conversion to e-mail service of court orders and judgments. In February 2004, the fax noticing service for civil cases will be eliminated. Fax noticing participants must convert to e-mail noticing by February 1, 2004. Counsel who currently receive service of court documents by U.S. Mail are also encouraged to sign up for e-mail noticing.

There are two methods to sign up for e-mail noticing:

1. Individually - On our web site (www.mnd.uscourts.gov), click on FORMS, then click on E-MAIL NOTICING AUTHORIZATION. Complete the form on the computer, print it, sign it, and fax it to 651-848-1125 (no cover sheet needed).
2. By law firm - On our web site (www.mnd.uscourts.gov), click on FORMS, then click on E-MAIL AUTHORIZATION BY FIRM. Complete the form on the computer, print it, sign it, and fax it along with a list of attorney names, bar numbers and e-mail addresses to 651-848-1125 (no cover sheet needed).
3. A special note for attorneys on criminal cases: Effective February 17, this service will include transmission of criminal orders and judgments. Please sign up now!

Civil and criminal court orders and judgments will be served by e-mail on attorneys of record from the court as a PDF (portable document format) attachment. Attorneys may provide up to three e-mail addresses (their own and two backup addresses) for receipt of the document; all three addresses will receive notices on all cases for which the attorney is listed as an attorney of record. Attorneys not registered for e-mail noticing will continue to receive court orders and judgments by U.S. Mail.

If you do not have a PACER (Public Access to Court Electronic Records) account, you need to obtain one now. PACER accounts will be necessary for viewing court documents on and after February 17, 2004. Register for a PACER account by calling 1-800-676-6856 or visit their web site at www.pacer.uscourts.gov.

In summary, what do I need to do in Phase One?

- 1) **Sign-up for e-mail noticing by February 1, 2004. Receiving court orders and judgments by e-mail is an introductory step to electronic case filing. Jump on board early.**
- 2) **Obtain a PACER account before February 17, 2004.**

Phase Two - Court Goes Live on Case Management (CM) System

On February 17, 2004, the court will convert its existing database of both open and closed cases to the new case management system. This conversion should be invisible to you with the following exceptions:

1. Effective February 17, 2004, **all court-generated documents** (e.g., orders, judgments, pretrial notices, minutes, etc.), will be sent to e-mail noticing participants through the new system. Instead of receiving a PDF attachment, the e-mail will provide a hyperlink to the document in ECF for viewing over the Internet. Attorneys who are not signed up for e-mail noticing will receive service of orders and judgments by U.S. Mail, as required by the Federal Rules.
2. **Use your ECF login and password** to view the documents that are listed with a hyperlink in your e-mail message. Your login and password will provide one “free peek” at the court generated documents. You can print and/or save the PDF version of the documents on your computer for future access.

If you access the file from the hyperlink using your login and password more than once, you will be prompted to input your PACER account information and you will be charged \$.07 per page with a \$2.10 maximum per document. This is a change from the current e-mail noticing procedure used by the court.

Your CM/ECF login and password together with your PACER account will also enable you to view docket sheets over the Internet for the same fee described above.

3. Attorneys who are enrolled in e-mail noticing will *also* receive an e-mail notice of every docket entry made in their case when the clerk’s office staff enters an attorney filing onto the docket. For example, when the clerk’s office docket a motion, you will receive an e-mail notice that includes the text of that docket entry. It will not include a hyperlink to the actual document until we go live on ECF in May. Between February 17 and May, it will only provide a hyperlink to the docket sheet. This notice will NOT constitute service for attorneys at this time.

In summary, what do I need to do in Phase Two?

**Watch for a difference in what you receive by e-mail from the court.
Use your login and password to view orders and court generated documents in ECF.**

Phase Three - ECF Training

In early March, the court will begin providing training on electronic case filing. Application for CLE credit has been submitted. We welcome attorneys, law firm support staff, and I.S. professionals to attend training. Learn first-hand in a safe environment; questions will be encouraged and are appreciated. We will offer a variety of training options including sessions at the courthouses, on-site training, web-based training, and train-the-trainer sessions. Look for more training information on our web site at www.mnd.uscourts.gov in February.

In summary, what do I need to do in Phase Three?

Register for training. We look forward to seeing you.

Phase Four - Court Goes Live on Electronic Case Filing (ECF) in May. Register!

During the month of May, the court will go live on ECF. This will enable you to file documents electronically to the court's system over the Internet. When we go live, you will be prompted to register for ECF. Part of this registration will include authorization for the court to provide electronic service of all documents that are filed electronically through the ECF system. The Court will provide you with further instruction on registration in the near future.

In summary, what do I need to do in Phase Four?

Register in May to begin e-filing and receiving all filing notices by e-mail.

We look forward to your participation on ECF. If you have questions regarding this mailing or during the coming months, please contact our help line at 1-866-325-4975, we are happy to assist you.

ECF Login/Password Document

For all Members of the District of Minnesota Federal Bar who are in Active Status

You have been assigned the following login and password for ECF. It will be necessary for you to use it to view all court generated documents beginning February 17, 2004. You will also use this password to file documents with the court when we go live on ECF in May. This is your personal information.

Attorney Name:«FIRST» «LAST»

Login: «BARID»

Password: «PASS»

Please keep this login and password for your records. The use of the login and password in ECF is important and will constitute your signature for Fed. R. Civ. P. 11 purposes. Please use care in sharing your password with others or delegating the use of your password to others.

Starting February 17, 2004, you will be able to change your password in ECF and update e-mail addresses. Please visit our web site at the address below. Step by step instructions, including screen shots, are posted for your use.

Log on to ECF at www.mnd.uscourts.gov